



## 104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

HB4255

Introduced 1/14/2026, by Rep. Kelly M. Cassidy

#### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

720 ILCS 5/48-11

Amends the Criminal Code of 2012. Provides that the statute prohibiting elephants from performing in traveling animal acts applies to "covered animals" rather than just elephants. Defines "covered animal" as any of the following animals, and hybrids of those animals: (1) elephantidae; (2) felidae, but excluding a domestic cat; (3) non-human primate; or (4) ursidae. Provides that the provisions of the amendatory Act are in addition to, and not in lieu of, any other laws protecting animal welfare. Provides that the provisions may not be construed to limit any State law or rules protecting the welfare of animals or to prevent a unit of local government from adopting and enforcing its own animal welfare ordinances and regulations. Contains a severability provision. Effective July 1, 2026.

LRB104 16708 RLC 30113 b

1 AN ACT concerning criminal law.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The Criminal Code of 2012 is amended by  
5 changing Section 48-11 as follows:

6 (720 ILCS 5/48-11)

7 Sec. 48-11. Unlawful use of a covered animal ~~an elephant~~  
8 in a traveling animal act.

9 (a) Definitions. As used in this Section:

10 "Covered animal" means any of the following animals, and  
11 hybrids of those animals:

12 (1) elephantidae;

13 (2) felidae, but excluding a domestic cat;

14 (3) non-human primate; or

15 (4) ursidae.

16 "Mobile or traveling animal housing facility" means a  
17 transporting vehicle such as a truck, trailer, or railway car  
18 used to transport or house animals while traveling to an  
19 exhibition or other performance.

20 "Performance" means an exhibition, public showing,  
21 presentation, display, exposition, fair, animal act, circus,  
22 ride, trade show, petting zoo, carnival, parade, race, or  
23 other similar undertaking in which animals are required to

1 perform tricks, give rides, or participate as accompaniments  
2 for entertainment, amusement, or benefit of a live audience.

3 "Traveling animal act" means any performance of animals  
4 where animals are transported to, from, or between locations  
5 for the purpose of a performance in a mobile or traveling  
6 animal housing facility.

7 (b) A person commits unlawful use of a covered animal ~~an~~  
8 ~~elephant~~ in a traveling animal act when he or she knowingly  
9 allows for the participation of a covered animal ~~an African~~  
10 ~~elephant (Loxodonta africana) or Asian elephant (Elephas~~  
11 ~~maximus) protected under the federal Endangered Species Act of~~  
12 ~~1973~~ in a traveling animal act.

13 (c) This Section does not apply to performance of covered  
14 animals ~~an exhibition of elephants~~ at a non-mobile, permanent  
15 institution, or other fixed facility, if the covered animal is  
16 not transported to that location for the purpose of the  
17 performance.

18 (d) Sentence. Unlawful use of a covered animal ~~an elephant~~  
19 in a traveling animal act is a Class A misdemeanor.

20 (e) The provisions of this amendatory Act of the 104th  
21 General Assembly are in addition to, and not in lieu of, any  
22 other laws protecting animal welfare. This Section may not be  
23 construed to limit any State law or rules protecting the  
24 welfare of animals or to prevent a unit of local government  
25 from adopting and enforcing its own animal welfare ordinances  
26 and regulations.

1 (Source: P.A. 100-90, eff. 1-1-18.)

2 Section 97. Severability. The provisions of this Act are  
3 severable under Section 1.31 of the Statute on Statutes.

4 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect July 1,  
5 2026.